



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

For immediate release: June 1, 2011 (11-12)
Contact: Mike Louisell (360) 902-1813

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, Washington 98504-2560
Visit our Web site at: agr.wa.gov

USDA to repay vet school loans for work in underserved rural Washington *Applications due July 8*

OLYMPIA – Livestock veterinarians willing to practice in Washington state's underserved rural areas will benefit from a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program that pays off up to \$75,000 of veterinary school loan debt.

Established by Congress, the USDA's Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program has funding in Washington state for five veterinarians who commit to provide veterinary services for food animals such as beef and dairy cattle, swine and poultry in areas without adequate veterinarian coverage.

"This competitive grant program is a welcome opportunity for veterinarians to reduce their debt and work in an exciting sector of agriculture in the Evergreen State," said Washington State Veterinarian Dr. Leonard Eldridge. "More veterinarians are needed for early detection of animal health diseases and to support Washington's large livestock industry."

WSDA worked with USDA to identify areas that have a strong need for food animal veterinary care to ensure a robust agricultural industry and to help protect public health. USDA will select five applicants to locate in Washington, including one each in the following regions:

- Central Washington—Benton and Franklin counties;
- Northeast Washington—Ferry, Pend Oreille and Stevens counties;
- Western Washington—Jefferson, Kitsap and Mason counties;
- Western Washington—Snohomish County;
- South Central Washington—the Central I-90 corridor south to the Oregon border.

The deadline to apply is July 8. Offers will be made to selected individual veterinarian applicants in September. Visit USDA's VMLRP website for an application at

http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/animals/in_focus/an_health_if_vmlrp.html. For further information, contact the USDA at vmlrp@nifa.usda.gov.

###